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*EXCERPTED*

#### FOREIGN OUTLOOK

Is the United States to blame, in part, for the starvation in Ethiopia? The chief culprit is Ethiopia's own radical ruler, Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who put weapons ahead of food and used trucks to transport soldiers instead of food. But there is a darker, as yet untold side to this tragedy. I have uncovered evidence that the Reagan administration placed strategic imperatives before humanitarian concerns, thereby imperiling the lives of innocent people.

The scandal reaches all the way into the National Security Council, the highest policymaking body in the land. I have learned that our government had intelligence reports dating back to 1982 warning of the impending devastation. A special inter-agency task force was formed to monitor the situation.

At the top-secret sessions, appeals for the United States to head off the famine were rejected. The National Security Council staunchly and stubbornly refused, citing strategic concerns. Not until it became clear that millions of people would die did the NSC soften its stand and permit some aid to be shipped to Ethiopia. Meanwhile, the NSC official, who was chiefly responsible for holding up the aid, has taken a plum position in the CIA.